

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2536

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY DACCA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 0259

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TC, BG, PK, IN

SUBJ: SHAIKH ZAYID'S LATEST VISIT TO SUB-CONTINENT

REF: NEW DELHI 1421

1. WITH RESPECT TO SHAIKH ZAYID'S VISIT TO INDIA, IMPRESSIONS WE HAVE GLEANED HERE COINCIDE WITH THOSE REPORTED BY NEW DELHI REFTEL.FOREIGN

MINISTER SUWAIDI ALSO MENTIONED FIGURE OF ONE MILLION TONS PER YEAR AS INDIAN REQUEST FOR ASSURED ANNUAL OIL SUPPLY FROM ABU DHABI, BUT HE INDICATED IT WAS ROUGH ORDER OF MAGNITUDE WHICH WAS STILL BEING STUDIED BY UAEG. WE GATHER SAME IS TRUE ABOUT VARIOUS JOINT SCHEMES FOR INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS, WHICH WERE APPARENTLY DISCUSSED BUT NO FIRM COMMITMENTS GIVEN. INDIANS HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT THESE WITH UAEG FOR SOME TIME, AND ARE FRUSTRATED, LIKE MANY OTHERS HERE, AT NOT BEING ABLE TO BRING THEM TO CONSUMMATION. ZAYID VISIT ALSO COINCIDED WITH PRESENT SHARP REDUCTION IN ABU DHABI OIL REVENUES WHICH HAS CAUSED UAEG TO BECOME MORE CHARY ABOUT FOREIGN ASSISTANCE COMMITMENTS.

2. PAKISTANI AMBASSADOR TELLS US THAT GOP RECEIVED FROM FONMIN SUWAIDI FULL BRIEFING ON ZAYID'S VISIT TO INDIA AND ASSURANCE THAT
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NO FINAL DECISION WILL BE MADE ON ABU DHABI ASSISTANCE TO INDIAN

INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS WITHOUT FIRST CONSULTING ISLAMABAD. (AMBASSADOR HASAN SAID, HOWEVER, THAT THIS ASSURANCE DID NOT EXTEND TO POSSIBLE ABU DHABI-INDIA OIL DEAL.) PAK AMB SAYS THAT PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO TOLD FONMIN THAT IN PRESENT UNCERTAIN STATE OF PAK-INDIAN RELATIONS, ANY ASSISTANCE TO INDIAN INDUSTRY WOULD HAVE TO BE EXAMINED CAREFULLY TO SEE WHETHER IT CONTRIBUTED TO INDIA'S "WAR POTENTIAL".

3. BHUTTO IS APPARENTLY PLANNING TO SEE SHAIKH ZAYID (WHO IS STILL HUNTING IN PAKISTAN) WHEN FORMER RETURNS FROM HIS WASHINGTON VISIT.

4. PAK AMB ALSO TOLD US THAT WHEN MUJIBUR RAHMAN WAS RECENTLY HERE HE ASKED SHAIKH ZAYID TO MEDIATE ON PAK/BANGLADESH DIFFERENCES, AND IN CHARACTERISTIC MOMENT OF SUSCEPTIBILITY TO SUCH FLATTERY, SHAIKH ZAYID AGREED. PAKS WERE HORRIFIED AT THIS PROSPECT AND PAK AMB HASAN IMMEDIATELY SOUGHT MEETING WITH SHAIKH ZAYID TO FEND ANY SUCH EFFORT OFF. IN MEETING WITH ZAYID, HASAN IN GREAT DETAIL WENT INTO COMPLEXITIES OF PAK/BANGLADESH FINANCIAL NEGOTIATIONS, ABOUT HALFWAY THROUGH SHAIKH ZAYID'S EYES BEGAN TO GLAZE OVER. HASAN SAID THAT AT END OF 3/4 HOUR PRESENTATION HE SIMPLY SAID, "AND SO, YOUR HIGHNESS, I THINK YOU WILL AGREE THAT THIS MATTER SHOULD BE LEFT IN THE HANDS OF COMMITTEES OF EXPERTS FOR THE TIME BEING." SHAIKH ZAYID AWOKE WITH A START, AND MUMBLED, "YES, YES, I SUPPOSE SO." HASAN SEEMS REASONABLY CONFIDENT THAT THE BENGALIS WILL HAVE A TOUGH TIME REKINDLING ANY FEVOR ON PART OF SHAIKH ZAYID IN MEDIATING ROLE.

5. WITH RESPECT TO DIFFERING REPORTS WE HAVE SEEN ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT ABU DHABI HAS GRANTED PAKISTAN CONCESSIONAL PRICES ON OIL SALES, I QUERIED HASAN ABOUT THIS AGAIN AND HE STATED FLATLY THAT GOP WAS PAYING THE GOING MARKET PRICE OF \$11.379 FOR A BARREL OF MURBAN CRUDE. HE SAID ONLY CONCESSIONS ABU DHABI HAD MADE TO GOP WERE IN WAIVING REQUIREMENT FOR BANK GUARANTEE ON LIFTINGS (WHICH ABU DHABI HAS REQUIRED FROM ALL OTHER COUNTRIES EXCEPT PROBABLY BANGLADESH) AND IN AGREEING NOT TO IMPOSE PENALTY ON GOP (AS THEY DO ON OTHER COUNTRIES) IF GOP UNABLE TO LIFT ALL OF THE OIL IT HAS CONTRACTED RIOR. OTHERWISE, HASAN STATED TO ME AGAIN, ABU DHABI HELD FIRM AGAINST

ANY PRICE CONCESSIONS TO PAKISTAN STATING THAT CLOSE AS UAE-PAK RELATIONS WERE, ABU DHABI WOULD NOT MAKE AN ESTABLISH PRECEDENT WHICH WOULD BECOME DIFFICULT TO DENY TO OTHER COUNTRIES.
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